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# PLAINS FORESTER

U.S. FOREST SERVICE



LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

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## THE CURSE OF ANONYMITY IS EXPOSED

Not long ago a field man - not from Kansas - said this: "As far as we know all good things come out of the State and Regional Offices--we never know who devises equipment or perfects the technique."

Why not have a page in PLAINS FORESTER under some such heading as "Hints and Hunches," or some other suitable designation?

At Mangum, Oklahoma, I noticed an effective brace on a G.M.C. pickup which was put in use by Aubrey Kirk. It is made of 1-3/4" by 1/8" strap iron and is attached to the side of the pickup about a foot above the rear end of the fender, where the lower end is fastened, and effectively prevents the breakage of G.M.C. rear fenders. I photographed this brace, but before I made use of it I visited the equipment shed at St. John, Kansas, where the equipment man, Cleo Seitsinger, has devised a brace which he has installed on several of the St. John pickups. Cleo's brace is in the form of a closed triangle, using the old brace as one of the sides. It is entirely out of sight and for this reason is preferable to the Kirk brace.

At Vernon, Texas, Junior Forester Croker proudly demonstrated a new type planting tray which apparently has considerable merit. Floyd Bennett works at the Manhattan Nursery, but much of his leisure time at home is spent in trying to perfect a machine to line out nursery stock. Certainly, the machine may never be perfected, but Floyd enjoys working on it; in fact, prefers this pastime to golf.

It may not be an individual on our pay roll who gives us our useful devices. The Merkle Tent and Awning Company of Hutchinson, Kansas, perfected the truck cover which we are now using on our trucks.

Are we going to squelch the field initiative by assuming the role of "Copy Cats," or are we going to encourage original thought by giving credit? In nearly all instances simple devices are the "brain children" of our dreamers who spend many weary hours off duty battling with visions which only rarely blossom into reality.

We frequently see the statement, "The Forest Service has devised a method of smoking out the cottonwood borers," or "The Forest Service has perfected a superior type of truck cover." Why not apply this same regimentation to other activities and say, "The Forest Service made a hole-in-one last Sunday at golf," or "The Forest Service has a potential stenographer in the form of a baby girl born in the organization last week"?

The individual is always more efficient than the machine or the organization--the individual thinks--and to squelch the individual by absorbing his devices or plagiarizing his ideas is sure to lead to lessened individual effort and the stagnation of the organization.

Publicity of individual inventions, and better ways of doing things, may prevent widely scattered workers from spending time on problems that have already been solved.

- W. G. Baxter, Kans.

#### SHELTERBELT SLOGAN SPROUTING

"Increase your crop yields by establishing field shelterbelts."

This may become a slogan for negotiators in the Plains States if we have a few more examples as encouraging as one turned in recently by Corlie Hall from New Rockford, North Dakota. It involves the experiences of W. J. Steinbach of New Rockford.

Steinbach was one of the first men in the New Rockford District to visualize the importance of planting trees in the Plains States, and as soon as the old Shelterbelt Project was inaugurated he filed his application for early consideration. Accordingly, in the Spring of 1935 the Forest Service planted a half-mile shelterbelt along the west side of a quarter section on his farm. Steinbach cultivated the belt carefully, and to the intense surprise of his neighbors those "little sticks" grew. In the Summer of 1937 those "little sticks" had stretched up and up until even the most skeptical of his neighbors had to admit that there was something to this tree-growing business.

Now Steinbach has definite information to back up his faith. He planted the 40-acre plot immediately adjacent to the shelterbelt on the east to oats in 1937, and he received a yield of 15 bushels to the acre. The next 40-acre plot to the east was also planted to oats, but since this field was outside of the area protected by the trees the yield dropped to 10 bushels per acre. In 1938, just to check the results of the previous year, Steinbach planted the two fields to barley. Again yield records were kept and again the trees proved their worth by boosting the yield from 15 bushels on the unprotected field to 22 bushels on the one protected by the shelterbelt.

Steinbach has other shelterbelts totaling  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles and he states that the yields here were also increased, although it is not possible in those instances to record the exact gain per acre since there are no unprotected fields for comparison.

- K. W. Taylor, N.Dak.

## WE MAY BE GOING TOO FAST

Edward J. Dortignac, Junior Forester of the Lake States Forest Experiment Station, who has just finished a survey of plantings in North and South Dakota in connection with the 1938 survival counts, was urged to express his views on the shelterbelt procedure. His article follows:

In the ambitious program of increased miles of planting during the Spring of 1938, I wonder if we have adhered closely in all cases to the more rigid standards set up for the Project? With the increased pressure on field men to negotiate for plantings, have we been forced to accept cooperators not really willing to care for the trees? Although the number of good belts far exceeds the poor ones, we must keep in mind that every poor belt looms up as a "sore thumb," and every abandoned tree belt means a slip-up on our part somewhere along the line. In such a case, would it not have been better to have never planted the belt?

It is doubtful if the survival percentages for 1938 will be much lower than for previous years; however, the indication after examining belts is that they are lower. Why? We cannot say that the average climatic conditions for the two States have been more severe than in all previous years of planting. It would be well to point out causes for mortality in tree belts in order of importance: (Not from analysis, but his own impressions.--D.S.O.)

1. Insect damage ('hoppers, beetles, and borers)
2. Use of small and poor stock
3. Lack of poor cultivation
4. Damage by livestock (cattle, sheep and hogs)
5. Rodents (mainly rabbits)
6. Poor planting
7. Soil Blowing (only in sandy soils where sand blasting occurs)
8. Selection of incorrect species for soil types

Grasshopper damage has been very severe during the 1938 season, yet, with usage of larger and better stock and possibly cleaner cultivation, perhaps this damage could have been lessened. As a general rule a large and thrifty tree is more likely to recuperate after repeated attacks by 'hoppers and beetles than a less thrifty and smaller tree. That borers account for 60 percent of cottonwood failures is by no means an exaggeration. This problem is up to the research men and will be solved.

Poor cultivation will be a direct cause of greater mortality in belts when smaller and poorer stock is used due to coverage and plowing out of trees. Continual use of single disks between tree rows is a bad policy. Farmers may not have tandem disks or other available cultivators, still all of them have drags. It would take but little effort to hook on a drag behind a single disk in cultivation, thereby eliminating to a certain extent the "mounding up" of soil on the tree rows.

Early cultivation may have been satisfactory, but July and August were the months in which belts should have been devoid of weeds. In this connection, it was extremely interesting to note that in over 80 percent of belts so planted that part of belt afforded protection to farmstead buildings, the survival and growth on that part of the belt protecting the buildings was surprisingly greater than elsewhere. Although several explanations

might be proffered, such as hand hoeing by the farmer and turkeys reducing the number of 'hoppers, it is doubtful whether these factors were of great significance.

It may be a wiser policy in the future to refrain from planting unfenced belts subject to a possibility of damage by livestock. Although two wires will not keep out cattle at all times, and possibly nothing short of woven wire will keep hogs and sheep out, still the bulk of damage occurred on unfenced or incompletely fenced belts.

The greatest amount of rabbit injury will occur over winter and early spring. As a general rule, rabbit injury did not account for many losses unless repeated injury followed. This type of damage has prevented growth and deformed trees, and can we say that growth is of less importance than survival?

Soil blowing and selection of incorrect species accounted for losses only on sandy soils and were not of any great importance.

In general, the "planting job" was very good -- few evidences of poor planting were encountered, and contrary to former opinion, the examination of older belts revealed that replants have proved fairly successful.

#### KEEPING THE WOLF FROM THE FENCE ROW

There are few things more pleasant than the glow of satisfaction, and at present the South Dakota organization is beaming because the fencing man will not visit 26 miles of 1939 plantings. The process of solving fencing problems for those 26 miles fairly takes one's breath.

It all followed a telephone conversation. The Midland National Life Insurance Company of Watertown, South Dakota and its cooperating members are the applicants for the 26 miles of shelterbelts, and the fencing needs were communicated over telephone to an official of the company.

The order followed immediately, and on November 8 the supplies were received: 15,500 (five carloads) of fence posts, 90 miles of barbed wire, and about 250 pounds of staples. Woven wire will be purchased locally as needed.

This exceptional and unquestioning compliance with the fencing policy is the result of the long-time interest of the Company's secretary-treasurer, Frank Bramble, in conservation and wildlife and his early faith in the advisability of the shelterbelt program. Personal contacts, press releases, and a general inspection of shelterbelt plantings in the Huron and Mitchell Districts strengthened his convictions and in 1937 the Midland Company and cooperating members applied for 27 belts. This year the applications number 44, totaling 26 miles.

When I first met Mr. Bramble, he assured me that he was behind our Project and he has backed up his words with action. It is indeed a source of satisfaction to have men of his standing "sold" on shelterbelt planting.

- Bruce S. Arnold, S.Dak.

## NEW METHOD FOR TESTING SEED

Recent discoveries in a rapid and simple method of testing the viability of dormant seeds are of interest to our nurserymen and, in fact, to the entire Project, since one bad feature of fall sowing has been that we have had to guess at how much seed to sow per acre. Obviously, if the seed is only 50 percent viable, twice as much is needed to produce a full stand; if we follow the old rule of "sow plenty," the cost of hand thinning is larger than the value of the seed thus wasted. Also, when seeds of the type having germ dormancy are purchased, a testing method is of value to Fiscal Control in authorizing payment.

The complicated methods of staining and microscopic examination, laboratory measurement of catalase enzyme activity, etc., are now discarded for the simple method of placing excised embryos on moist cotton or filter paper, at about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Kept under these conditions for from three to ten days, the viable seeds will show some indications of germinative vigor, while the non-viable ones will turn yellow or brown and later become moldy.

Methods of removing the outer and inner seed coats to expose the embryo vary according to the physical construction of the seed. Chokecherry and plum can be cracked with a pair of pliers equipped with an adjustable stop screw to prevent crushing the kernel. The uninjured pits are soaked in water overnight, whereupon the inner seed coat is slit at the end opposite from the germ and the edges of the cut pried back a little. Then a gentle squeeze between thumb and forefinger and the entire embryo pops out freely. Considerable soaking of tough-coated seeds, like Russian olive and mountain ash, permits cutting the outer seed coat with a scalpel or sharp knife. Seeds of Hawthorne, which are extremely hard, will pry open easily if soaked for an hour in sulphuric acid and washed thoroughly.

The indications of viability vary somewhat according to species. The ability of a live seed to withstand deterioration and attack of fungi is the principal criterion, though most species will show some stirring of growth activity in all but the weakest of the live seeds. In the case of plum, there will occur enlargement and turning green of the cotyledons, and in some cases the emergence of a radicle from the germ. Chokecherry embryos turn bright red and part of the live ones start to open up, while the dead seed discolors as the decay fungi attack and toward the end of the test give off a foul odor. *Rhodotyphus kerroides* shows pronounced enlargement of the cotyledons, appearance of green color and some root growth in fairly fresh seed, while in seeds three to five years old the coloration is slight or lacking and only the absence of deterioration indicates that the seed is sound and would grow if properly after-ripened to remove the dormancy. Seeds such as pine and fir which are not very dormant but respond to low temperature treatments can be tested by the above method and results are obtained in three or four days.

This method has been checked against the results obtained by actual germination following proper after-ripening at lot temperatures, and the sets of results agree very closely. Some of the seeds stimulated by this method of handling the excised embryos will, if subsequently transferred

to the soil, produce plants but do not grow at a normal rate. They exhibit dwarfish characteristics for several months before normal growth is resumed. By subjecting the dwarfish plants to low temperatures, the period of retarded growth can be shortened. Instances have been reported where Chinese elm seed which had been carried over to the following season by dry storage at low temperature, gave good germination but the resulting trees were sluggish compared with those grown from fresh seed. This appears to be a result of partial dormancy of the seed, and it is suggested that trials be made of stratifying carry-over Chinese elm seed for 30 days or longer before sowing.

- Carl A. Taylor, Nebr.

(Editor's Note: Carl refers to a stop screw attached to pliers to prevent crushing the kernel of chokecherry and plum seed. Ye editor has seen the pliers which Carl fitted with that device, one jaw of the pliers having been drilled to take the screw and a lock nut attached.)

#### WILD GAME DINNER, ONLY SOME GUESTS ATE TURKEY

A few weeks ago, Al Williams got a bright idea which finally materialized into what is hoped to be the first of a series of annual game dinners for the North Dakota organization. The affair was held at the Mollie Cafe at Jamestown on the evening of October 22.

Either the Nimrods overestimated their abilities, or the enthusiasts were too optimistic -- at any rate some of the diners got plain turkey and pretended it was wild. There were many "explanations," but in fairness to the hunters it must be said that the weather was not what it could have been for hunting, and perhaps those who ate turkey gained some solace from the knowledge that the best hunting weather is not the most pleasant weather.

The program committee arranged for dancing for those who wished, while Director Cobb and myself were well aware that there was one table of bridge -- we were taken into camp like nobody's business by Mesdames Cobb and Thomas. Music for the dancing was by the orchestras of Tommy Dorsey and Bob Crosby, via a nickelodeon which functioned very satisfactorily.

A highlight of the evening was the playing of Gunnar Lind on his "chest organ." He played a number of choice selections, although with a name like Lind he couldn't avoid being good.

The only hang-overs from the party were pleasant memories.

- K. W. Taylor, N.Dak.

#### A MATTER OF TERMINOLOGY. GOT ANY SUGGESTIONS?

On this Project we speak of the farmer as the cooperator. That is wrong. The work is being done on private land; the Government is the co-operator. It is poor psychology to call the farmer instead of the Government the cooperator. Even some of the annoying records required of you, such as undeposited "cooperation" from the farmer are results of this reverse English.

I do not like the terms farmer, landowner, operator. What would you suggest as a term more descriptive of equal partnership, or the farmer receiving the contribution?

- D. S. Olson, R.O.

### TWIG GIRDLEERS CAN BE STOPPED

Some of the Texas shelterbelts, particularly in the Childress area, have been damaged by twig girdlers within the last few months, but apparently a means of control has been found. The insects have been most active on honeylocusts and have cut off twigs nearly an inch in diameter.

Early in September Edgar H. Kemp of the Childress District sent some beetles to the State Office, together with information that he was spraying for their control. All of the information we could find in this office at that time was that the most effective control was to gather the fallen twigs and burn them to destroy the eggs. Kemp was so informed.

Help was sought from the Entomology Department of the Texas A & M College, and Professor S. W. Bilsing, head of the department, in a letter stated that the remedy was to gather the twigs in fall and winter and burn them. However, one paragraph gave information which indicates that twig burning is more applicable to larger and older trees than to our younger planted shelterbelts. Professor Bilsing wrote:

"If you have small trees which you wish to protect which are in the vicinity of other trees, the best way is to spray them with arsenate of lead at the rate of two or three pounds per 50 gallons of water. The spraying should be done in the middle of August to the first of September. This insect feeds on the bark of the tender twigs near their tips, and if you completely cover them with arsenate of lead, they will be killed before they are ready to lay eggs, and a minimum amount of damage will result."

Kemp's report seems to verify this. He says that a careful examination and re-examination of the belts previously poisoned show that without exception the damage by these insects has been checked, that there was little or no indication of fresh cuts, and that numbers of dead beetles were on the ground while few live ones could be found.

- Walter E. Webb, Tex.

### "THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES"

We just wonder if there isn't a touch of sarcasm in the thanks of W. G. Baxter, Kansas, for the "lovely" trip which was a photographic detail in Kansas and Oklahoma. He had two cameras, but both had to be sent in for repairs -- they were like babies, choosing the most embarrassing moments to misbehave. Then, just because cloud effects are looked for in composing attractive pictures, the clouds took a vacation. Baxter, however, reports one signal success when he faced a bawling Holstein bull in the middle of the bull's home pasture. Only three or four feet separated the pair so that the bull could hear what Baxter said and, believe it or not, our Kansan's persuasiveness cleared the path of progress (Negotiators, please take note). A dog was not so amenable to argument, however, and left a canine imprint on Baxter's boots. Just minor happenings included the loss of two shirts in the barbed wire fencing. Our photographer got some dandy pictures, just the same.

### OH, YEAH?

Thanks, "Red," for your article on the subterranean activities of *Thomomys* sp. et al; however, my query as to the possibility of vernal appetite depravity in *Citellus* sp. still goes.

- L. A. Williams, N.Dak.

#### LATE-BLOOMING LILACS IN THE "FROZEN NORTH"

Somebody slipped a "ringer" into the Corn Show at the City Hall at Enderlin, North Dakota, September 14. It was a large bunch of purple lilacs which had been picked from bushes surrounding a church a few miles southwest of Enderlin, and it put in a large bid toward stealing the show. This is the second instance of late-blooming lilacs to come to our attention this year, the other second crop occurring in the far northwestern corner of North Dakota. Lilacs, of course, can't read and know nothing of the long hard winter which is our due this year.

- T. C. Hutchinson, N.Dak.

#### STATE FORESTER AND STAFF HOSTS IN OKLAHOMA

State Forester Glen R. Durrell and his staff were hosts to the personnel of the Oklahoma State Office of the PSFP and their families at a "tacky clothes" party on the evening of October 31. Freeman H. Cook, in charge of public relations for Oklahoma, was master of ceremonies and kept things moving at high speed throughout the evening.

In the competition of "tacky togs," Senior Clerk Young carried off the honors among the men, and Mrs. A. N. Butler among the women. Max Pfaender, Mr. Butler and Milton F. Olson closely matched Young's ingenuity for tarnished effects, while Senior Stenographer "Esmorelda (Turnipseed) North", Mrs. Durrell and Mrs. Young went into the finals against Mrs. Butler.

The honest-to-goodness stenographers had their day -- or rather evening -- but the dictators stole the show. Harry Rigdon proved himself just a little less rapid than a machine gun, computations with a stop watch and a comptometer revealing that he spouted 500 words a minute. At least, that's what the scorekeepers said. His team mate, Junior Stenographer Ruth Purdy, gave up in disgust after 10 seconds of this and didn't come back for the second round.

Cider, pumpkin pie, halloween candies, coffee and cocoa were the refreshments.

- A. N. Butler, Okla.

#### SHELTERBELT AN OUTDOOR RESTAURANT

There are at least four Santa Fe Railroad employees who believe in the shelterbelt program, Karl Ziegler of Hutchinson, Kansas, learned last month when he was counting red cedar survival in the Carl Coleman and E. P. Yust belts near Sylvia, Kansas. He reached the Coleman belt, which was planted in 1937, in time to find four railroad section workers enjoying lunch in the shade of the trees.

As a sort of afterthought, Karl reported that the survival of red cedar was 88 percent in Coleman's shelterbelt and 97 percent in Yust's.

- T. Russell Reitz, Kans.

#### HO, HUM! IT'S AN OLD STORY

The Washington Office advises that our Fiscal Year 1938 Activity Expenditure Reports have been reviewed and found to be correct. After perusing the elated write-up in one Regional publication after receipt of a similar notification, we are impelled to state it is merely an old story on this Project.

- R. L. Bennett, R.O.

## TAKE A LESSON FROM JIMMY WATT

I've been thinking about James Watt when he watched the steam rattling the lid of his mother's teakettle and finally put it to work in the steam engine. If I could get you fellows to use some of your steam to sell the farmers on fencing instead of blasting me with the unfencing question, the "situation would be well in hand," and I might have time to see a football game once in a while.

We are sparring mainly with a phantom. The object(ion) doesn't exist. Our policy has not been "no fence, no shelterbelt," but rather applicants complying with the standards are given first choice. If it were deemed necessary to break down certain restrictions in order to get more applicants, it would be decided when the time came, whether to lower our quota or our standards. This is not discrimination against "the farmer who cannot supply a fence," but discriminating on the part of the Government in selecting its place for investments. The recent reduction in quotas for spring 1939 planting was made solely to uphold standards that were considered important to the success of the work. If we remove these requirements one by one (and they have all been up for withdrawal or modification at some time or other) there is no justification for our being on this Project. There is ample evidence all around that efforts expended in the past in far more tree planting than we have done, largely failed because some of these essential requirements were passed up or slighted. No single factor is the key but rather all of them or the lack of them contribute to the final result. The moment exceptions are allowed the standard breaks down - unless we have the farmers thoroughly educated to the importance of these requirements. That is our primary job here. Some day the farmers will have to take over all of this work, and we hope they will know as much about trees through our guidance as they now know about wheat, corn, cotton, etc.

Yes, suppose there is no livestock on the farm at present. What about next year and the next, with changing operators and owners who are likely to bring in livestock? And don't forget that the keynote in the various farm programs, the new Soil Conservation Districts, is land use adjustments with emphasis on diversified farming, which here means more forage crops, more livestock. Our interest in these trees goes far beyond the first few years and protection against livestock remains important as the shelterbelt gets older. If the farmer doesn't fence now what assurance have we that he will later? Actually, many farmers have been planning to use these shelterbelts for their stock in later years, not realizing that such practice will spell doom to the trees despite the fact that grazing has ruined thousands of old plantings all up and down the Plains region. What better assurance against stirring up sandy soils, packing heavy soils, breaking, trampling, browsing reproduction, underbrush, and side branches; avoiding the climax of sod and a few scattered stagheaded trees, than a fence around the planting at the start. We can't drive this point on fencing home if we delay it, anymore than we can get good establishment if we were to place our emphasis on replanting instead of the initial planting.

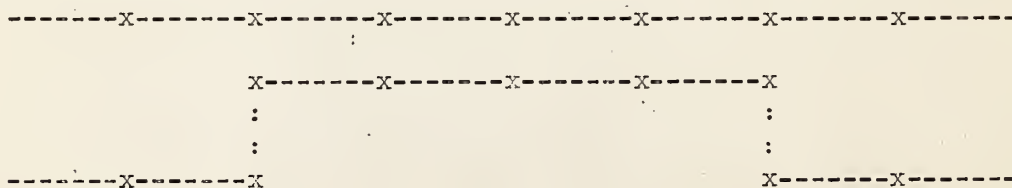
When the trees are newly planted they need protection against livestock, but in addition the fence has many other purposes. Without a fence

the isolation strip soon blends with the adjoining field and is lost. The tree rows become turning room for operating tillage equipment on the adjoining field. Without a fence driveways are made through the shelterbelts. A fence definitely defines the boundary. Without a roadside fence, the planting becomes a part of the roadside instead of the farmer's field, and invites digging up overgreen trees, cutting Christmas trees, vandalism, hunting, etc. A fence will not prohibit this but it does establish ownership of the trees to the farm and its psychological effect on the public is perhaps a stronger barrier than the physical obstruction.

There is no surer way to eliminate the applicant who quickly loses interest in trees when cultivation, etc. is required of him, than having him invest something in the enterprise before we contribute our major portion.

The farmer who will not or cannot supply the fence is fading more and more out of the picture. Some, it is admitted, are hard pressed to supply new fencing, but in most cases old fencing material is available. Many cases have come to my attention where neighbors supplied old material to one who did not have it. But those who still must buy new fence and cannot, will have to be taken care of in some other way, such as through loans from the FSA, just as they made their seed loans. We have an administrative policy requiring 50% of the cost of establishing shelterbelts from the farmers. Next year it may be law. In the future it will tend to be more from the farmer. If he doesn't furnish fencing, he'll have to furnish cash, which doesn't help the situation any. Even though we may justify temporary release of these exceptions, we cannot dodge these same policies and requirements in the near future. To break down now will mean losing all we have gained and make it that much harder to come back, and come back we must. So I say stand by your guns.

Believing that this fencing question will for years be a controversial point, I am suggesting in the new planting manual that as our shelterbelts get old enough to give shade and protection to livestock, the interior fence be inset at one or two places for livestock, as shown in the following diagram. Three rows of trees will be left in the enclosure,



but the remainder in this section opened up. This will provide a counter move to the farmer's temptation to open up the entire planting for livestock, and in a few years it will be a daily reminder of what happens to trees when not protected from livestock.

- D. S. Olson, R.O.

# FIRST THE QUESTION: NOW THE ANSWER

An experiment to determine the results obtained from the cultivation of conifer rows in shelterbelts was conducted this summer in the Valley City District in North Dakota. The experiment was announced in the September issue of PLAINS FORESTER.

Two shelterbelts, where survival in the conifer rows was uniformly high, were chosen. Cedar had been planted in one, pine in the other. Both belts were exceptionally clean between the rows, but in the rows was a heavy growth of pigeon grass 12 to 14 inches high. Each of the conifer rows received the same treatment, complete hoeing for one-third the length of the row, removal of weeds for one foot from each side of the trees in a third of the row, and the rest untouched.

Careless cultivation by the farmer in whose shelterbelt the pines were planted resulted in uprooting a large portion of them and nullified the experimental effort. The work with the cedars was carried on, however, and the resulting indications are considered important.

Following are the tabulations of the three groups of cedars at the beginning and close of the experiment:

<u>July 25, 1938</u>	<u>Plot No. 1</u>	<u>Plot No. 2</u>	<u>Plot No. 3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Alive	52 (86.6%)	68 (80%)	53 (68.8%)	173
Damaged	6 (10%)	10 (11.7%)	10 (12.9%)	26
Dead	2 ( 3.3%)	7 ( 8.2%)	14 (18.1%)	23
Total	<u>60</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>222</u>
Average Height	10 inches	10 inches	8 inches	

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<u>October 15, 1938</u>				
Alive	55 (91.6%)	68 (80.0%)	49 (63.6%)	172
Damaged	3 ( 5.0%)	7 ( 8.2%)	10 (12.9%)	20
Dead	2 ( 3.3%)	10 (11.7%)	18 (23.3%)	30
Total	<u>60</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>222</u>
Average Height	11 inches	11 inches	8 inches	

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Plot No. 1--Row hoed and weeds completely removed.

Plot No. 2--Weeds removed for one foot from each side of tree.

Plot No. 3--Tree row not hoed, supporting a dense growth of pigeon grass 11 inches tall.

Especially interesting is the fact that some of the trees in Plot 1 which were listed as damaged on July 25 apparently had fully recovered and on October 15 were counted as alive. In Plot 2, however, three of the damaged trees died, and in Plot 3 the change was a reduction of four in the number of live plants and an increase of four in the number of dead trees, although it is probable that four of the trees listed in July as damaged died and four of the formerly thrifty plants were damaged during the season. The trees in Plots 1 and 2 grew an inch, but those in Plot 3 did not increase in height.

Some of the results noted cannot be stated in arithmetical tables. In the first place, the trees in Plots 1 and 2 have a much better color and show more vigorous growth than do those in Plot 3, although grasshoppers caused some damage in Plots 1 and 2 but not in Plot 3. In the early part of the experiment a small amount of sun scald appeared in Plots 1 and 2, an indication that heavy weed growth should never be allowed in the conifer rows because as a result of the dense shading the trees develop a softer foliage. It is probable, too, that drying winds will have more disastrous effects on trees which have been protected during the early part of the growing season and later have had the protection removed.

We realize that, dealing with so few trees in each group, the evidence is not conclusive, but we do believe the results indicate that greater success in growing conifer stock will be obtained if the tree rows are kept clean.

- F. E. Cobb, N.Dak.

#### THE REGIONAL OFFICE GETS TOGETHER AFTER HOURS

With an almost 100 percent attendance, the Regional Office winter social schedule got under way on the evening of November 26 with a basket social at the Y.M.C.A. The showing of a movie, "Niagara Falls in Winter," came first, after which Elton Howland exhibited a film taken there in the summer when he and Mrs. Howland were honeymooning at that newlywed's Mecca. (Howland wasn't strictly impersonal in his selection of "shots," you understand.) Then followed a couple of comedy films, and lastly the colored motion picture of shelterbelt planting and the results, during the showing of which Ed Perry took over the helm. Ed, however, shone best later in the evening as an auctioneer, doing right well by the girls who furnished the basket lunches. Games, in which a few of us were taken in with a naivete which almost made it a compliment, filled the interim between the motion pictures and Ed's solo appearance on the auctioneer's stand. The women certainly kept their secrets, because only one man got his wife's basket, although from the bidding it seemed as though the final high bidder was acting on a hunch. Oh, well, you do that every time you try to pair an ace in the hole - and anyway everyone had a good time and a swell lunch, and a conscience that permitted easy sleep.

- Harold J. Swan, R.O.

#### IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

In answer to Carl Taylor's advertisement in PLAINS FORESTER of Vol. 1, No. 1, a chess game was started in November 1936. This game was to be played during the slack seasons of the year. Since there has been a dearth of slack seasons, we wish to report that the game between Carl and this writer was just recently completed. Owing to the fact that Carl is not much of a hand to brag, and we are a man of few words, the results of this game will not be announced publicly.

We intend to check this matter with the Regional Office and if more slack seasons are promised for the near future, another game will be started sometime during the winter.

- Howard Carleton, Jr., Okla.

### SPARKS FROM AN ELECTRICAL FENCE

Four or five inches of snow have fallen in the past 24 hours, bringing back down with it a good inch of North Dakota's real estate that had gone up everywhere but on the stock market. However, from some time in July of this year until the coming of this snow, precipitation in any shape or form was sadly lacking. One of the headaches of this bewhiskered drouth was dust and lots of it.

While cruising around the countryside a few weeks ago, I happened to see a Black Angus cow showing a very peculiar lack of respect for an electrical fence in that she was scratching her hide on the single, supposedly charged wire. Puzzled, I stopped to investigate and very reluctantly touched the wire. Nothing happened. Becoming bolder I grabbed the wire in one hand and touched a steel post with the other. The result was a nice jolt for my pains. The soil in this field happened to be a deep sandy loam and contained quite a bit of moisture. By scalping the top dry soil and standing on the moist soil it was easy to get a shock by merely touching the wire with one hand.

But what cow or horse, for that matter, is going to scrape away this perfectly good insulation just to defeat its purpose in getting to greener pastures on the other side. In the heavier soils our bovine or equine friends if they were willing, could dig deep enough to walk under the wire and still not find moist soil, which leads us to believe that in this country of prolonged dry spells and plowed fields, electrical fences are about as useless as a full house against a royal flush.

- Charles F. Pears, N.Dak.

### SIDNEY BURTON ON SICK LIST

Sidney Burton is getting back his "sea legs" and soon will be able to ride his ship again on the stormy seas of inspection. He was taken ill on Armistice Day and at this writing is still pretty weak. It will be several days before he will be back at his office.

### WELL, AT LEAST MRS. EMERSON SAVIES

All members of the State Office who attended Dr. Wheeler's illustrated lecture at Grand Island October 26 enjoyed a delightful pheasant dinner at State Director Emerson's home. There seemed to be some question as to whether Emerson or Champagne was the most successful pheasant hunter, but we all agree that Mrs. Emerson knows all there is to know about the cooking of them. We regret that the pheasant season is so short that there is not more opportunity for such skill to be demonstrated.

- Ena M. Lind, Nebr.

### HANG ON, JOHN, HANG ON!

I just read in PLAINS FORESTER about the man's farm leaving. You may inform him that it passed by here yesterday. This made our nursery lease restless, and it is leaving home today (November 7). Do you reckon if we would beat on tin pans it would settle like the bees do? I suggest we have a toupee made with the following specifications: Color, apricot green; parted every 21 inches; size 2 acres; tailored to fit the bald spot which has already blown away in the west 20 acres. There is no tonic that will bring back vegetation on this area, but the toupee would give a much more pleasing appearance from the highway.

- John Rogers, Kansas.

## IN DEFENSE OF THE WPA EMPLOYEE

We have been hearing too many nasty "cracks" about WPA labor - about their inclination to find repose sprawled on the handle of a shovel, or to seek soothing solace in the shade of nearby shrubbery. These "wise-cracks" are taken in good spirit, for the most part, by the people at whom they are directed, but some of the so-called jokes contain pointed barbs that must be keenly felt.

The fact that they are taken in good spirit only goes to prove that sometimes the victims of a joke are of larger caliber than those who originate them. We wonder what the reaction would be if their positions were reversed. After all, it is only by the grace of God and good fortune that some of us who have better jobs are not on the relief rolls. It is well to remember that most of the people working on WPA are not doing so by choice. They would much rather have a good steady job in private employment. Being victims of circumstance over which they, least of all, have had no control, they are merely doing the best they can until conditions improve.

We, in North Dakota, have found our WPA laborers very satisfactory. When we got to operating on regular money there is no question but that we will use from 70 to 80 percent of the laborers that we already have.

- Auburn S. Coe, N.Dak.

## PERSONNEL MATTERS

Four Shelterbelt Assistants have been added to the Oklahoma organization. They are Fred R. Yaruss, from Syracuse, New York; Justin E. Longmoor, from North East, Pennsylvania; Theodore E. Raide, from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and John Gregory Marshall, from Hartford, Connecticut. Yaruss and Longmoor have had previous Forest Service experience with Region 9 and Raide and Marshall with Region 8. Yaruss is a graduate of the New York State College of Forestry, Longmoor of the University of Washington, Raide of the University of Idaho, and Marshall of Yale University. The first three reported for duty November 1, and Marshall on November 4.

- A. N. Butler, Okla.

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Two Region 9 men have been appointed as Assistant State Directors of the Prairie States Forestry Project, Hy Goldberg for the Texas post and Fred Pierce for duty in Kansas. Goldberg formerly was attached to the Division of Information and Education of Region 9 and for the last three years has been District Ranger on the Upper Michigan. He is to report at Wichita Falls by December 1. Pierce, who is a former District Ranger, has been on the Supervisor's staff of the Ottawa Forest for the last three years. He will report at Manhattan about the first of the year.

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William J. Cochran has been transferred from Region 2, where he was District Ranger on the Routt Forest, to the PSFP, with headquarters at Hotela, South Dakota. He entered the Forest Service in May 1936, and had been in Region 2 since then. He reported to South Dakota in October.